



NATIONAL  
FARM to SCHOOL  
NETWORK

# OUR VALUES

We believe that farm to school activities built on these **six shared community values** will move us closer to a just, equitable food system that promotes the health of all school children and benefits producers, workers, educators, and their communities:

**Economic justice:** Farm to school and ECE isn't just about food miles, it's about the livelihoods of the people who grew, harvested, processed, and prepared this food. We have the chance to build relationships between producers, workers, and consumers in ways that enrich communities and address economic racial injustices.

**Environmental justice:** Education and the purchasing power of meal programs can shift our food system away from practices that contribute to climate change and pollute communities of color, and towards a more equitable, sustainable use of our soil and water.

**Health impact:** Farm to school and ECE activities go beyond getting kids the calories they need, but also give them the tools for childhood nourishment and lifelong health. In addition to key nutrients provided by school meals, kids should be empowered with the knowledge and skills to build healthy habits later in life and increase their sovereignty in our food system. School nutrition professionals should receive the equipment, training, and operational support to increase whole-ingredient, scratch cooking of healthier and tasty meals.

**Prioritizing racial equity:** Progress towards a just food system requires us to address the historic and ongoing structural racism embedded in our food system and to actively promote food sovereignty and racial equity in farm to school and ECE activities.

**Respecting workers and educators:** School nutrition professionals play essential roles in promoting fresh, healthy foods for our kids. The workers who harvest, process, transport, prepare and serve the vast majority of our nation's food supply deserve -- but don't currently have -- the same legal protections as workers in other industries in our country. Policies and practices should respect their rights and value their work appropriately.

**Animal welfare:** Humane treatment of animals in food production is a key part of a respectful, relational – not extractive – food system. Inhumane conditions in meat and poultry production are intertwined with the corporate consolidation of our food system, and the prioritization of cheaply produced meat at the expense of animal welfare, worker safety, farmer livelihoods, and community health.

In order for these values to be actualized, it is important that the most impacted stakeholders in our communities have a core role in the development and implementation of all farm to school efforts.